

Submission ID: S26E9E25D

Please see our attached representation including photographs taken personally within 1 mile of our house and the proposed site.

Objection to the East Pye Solar Development Consent Order

Personal impact on our home, our family and Footpath 6, Brooke (Site 9)

Project	East Pye Solar (Planning Inspectorate reference EN0110014)
Applicant	East Pye Solar Limited (Island Green Power)
Submitted jointly by	Michael Phillips and Helen Phillips
Address	[REDACTED]
Interested Party reference	[REDACTED]
Submission	Joint Written Representation for the Examination deadline of 6 October 2026
Date	5 October 2026

Summary of this representation

This is a joint Written Representation from Mike and Helen Phillips. We live at [REDACTED] about [REDACTED] yards from Site 9 of the proposed East Pye Solar scheme, [REDACTED]. Mike made a Relevant Representation objecting to the scheme (Interested Party reference [REDACTED]). This joint Written Representation expands on it, and Helen joins in it fully. We object because:

- Site 9 would put industrial solar arrays, fencing and CCTV right next to our home and our village. The applicant's own Scoping Report puts the nearest Brooke properties only 35m from the site and the Brooke Conservation Area only 50m away.
- Footpath 6, which we walk every day with our two dogs and use with our children and grandchildren, crosses Site 9 from north to south. It would become a fenced corridor through a power station for up to 60 years.
- The fields are home to roe and muntjac deer, brown hares, nesting skylarks, owls and buzzards, which we have photographed. Skylark is a Red-listed bird of conservation concern and brown hare is a Section 41 priority species.
- Our skies are exceptionally dark. Seething Observatory, 3.1 miles from us as the crow flies, is located here because of those dark skies, and construction and security lighting would put them at risk.
- Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane are single-track lanes with passing places. They are not suitable for construction traffic, yet the applicant names Littlebeck Lane as an access route to Site 9.
- Our home was arranged around our family of five children and six grandchildren, [REDACTED], so they can stay with us and enjoy the countryside. The scheme would take away the main reason we live here, for most of our grandchildren's lives.
- The applicant has not shown why this site in particular is needed. National policy (EN-3) asks applicants to prefer previously developed land and to keep public rights of way open and attractive to use.

We ask the Examining Authority to recommend that consent is refused. If it does not, we ask that Site 9 is removed from the Order. As a minimum, we ask for no construction access via Mill Lane or Littlebeck Lane and for proper protection of Footpath 6. We also ask the Examining Authority to walk Footpath 6 and Mill Lane during its site inspections.

1. About us and why this place matters

We live at [REDACTED]. We have five children and six grandchildren, [REDACTED]. We chose this house, and have been extending it (the building work is visible in Photo 1), because it gives us five bedrooms and flexible living space. Our whole family can come and stay with us, sometimes all together, and enjoy the Norfolk countryside right on our doorstep.

That countryside is the open farmland directly behind our home. Our grandchildren go out with us onto Footpath 6 to look for deer and hares, watch the skylarks in summer, and see the owls and buzzards along Mill Lane. This is not a view we look at now and again. It is part of everyday family life, and it is the reason we live where we do.

We also have two border collies, [REDACTED], and we walk them on this land every day, all year round. For us the scheme is not an abstract matter of megawatts. It would take away a large part of our country life.

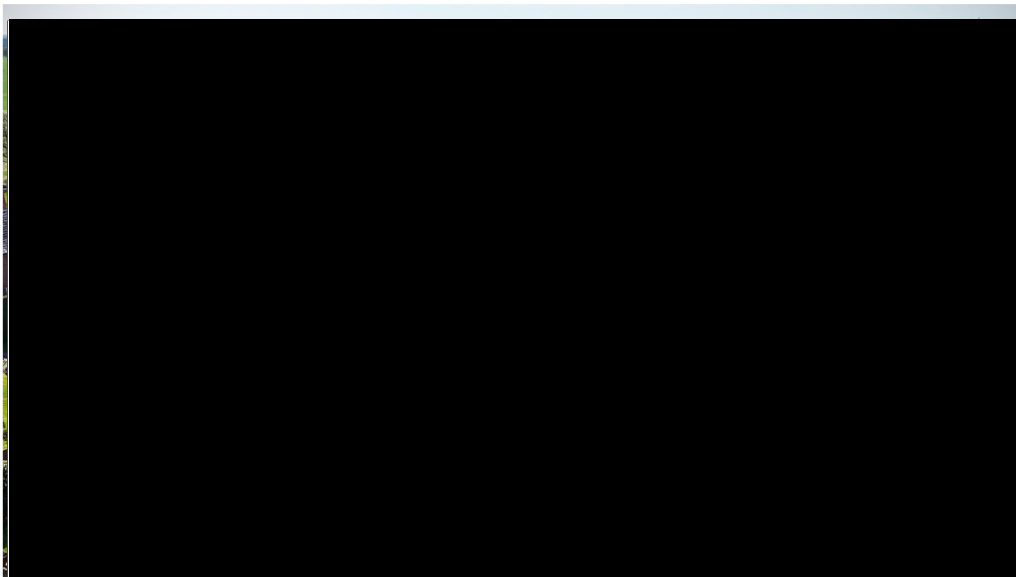


Photo 1: Our home, [REDACTED] looking out over the open fields. The field in the top left-hand corner of this view is proposed for solar panels as part of Site 9.

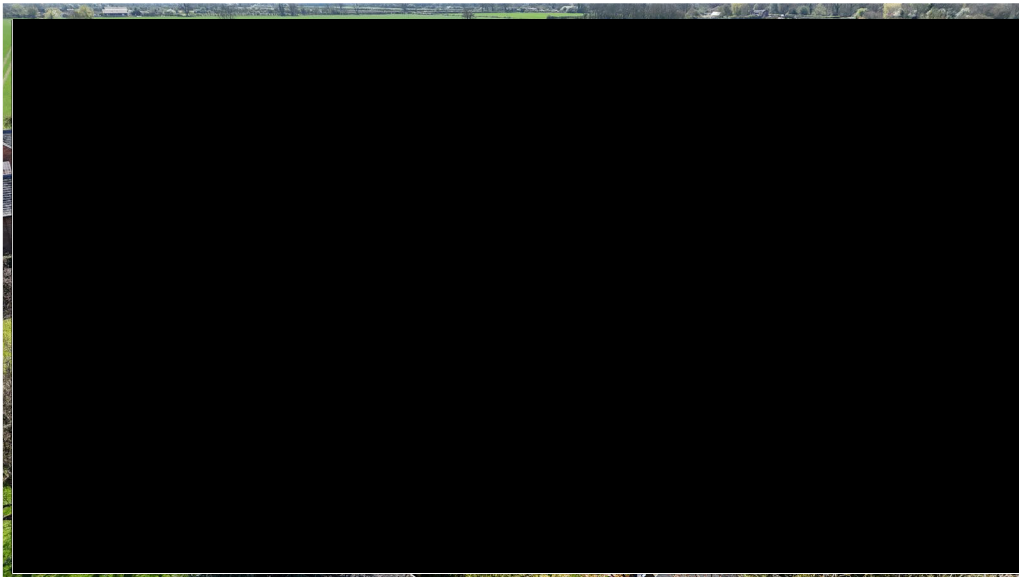


Photo 2: [REDACTED]. Both fields at the top of the photo are proposed to hold solar arrays. The large house at the top of this photo is the one at the bottom of Footpath 6 in Photo 3. [REDACTED]

2. How close Site 9 is to our home

Photo 3 shows the Site 9 layout looking north-west over Brooke. The solar fields are shaded red and the proposed mitigation areas blue. Footpath 6 runs from the bottom of High Green Gardens, [REDACTED] up to Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane. The "Proposed Transport Route" runs alongside Littlebeck Lane.



Site 9 (150 acres)

Brooke - Looking North West

Solar sites (shaded in red)
Mitigation areas (shaded in Blue)

Photo 3: Site 9 (around 150 acres), Brooke, looking north-west. Solar sites are shaded red and mitigation areas blue. Footpath 6, Mill Lane, Littlebeck Lane and the proposed transport route are marked. [REDACTED]

The applicant's own documents confirm how close and how sensitive this site is. The EIA Scoping Report (January 2025) says:

- "The nearest populated area to Site 9 is Brooke, with the closest properties located 35m north" (para 2.11.3).
- "PRoW 'Brooke FP6' crosses Site 9 from north to south and connects to Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane" (para 2.11.16).
- The Brooke Conservation Area is 50m north of Site 9. Grade II listed Waterfield Cottage, Oldhouse Farmhouse and its barn are 150–200m away (Table 9.10).
- One of the applicant's own landscape viewpoints (VL5) is "PRoW Brooke FP6 south of High Green Gardens", adjacent to Site 9. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], our home is among the properties that would be most directly affected by Site 9. We would see the construction, live with it, and hear and see the operational scheme from our home and garden.

3. Footpath 6: our daily walk

Footpath 6 is a well-used, much-loved route out of Brooke into open farmland. Photos 4 and 5 show what it is like today: a grass and earth path between wide arable fields, with long open views, hedgerows and big skies. Photo 6 was taken at the top of the footpath just before Mill Lane, on the same walk on which we saw the deer in Photo 7.



Photo 4: Footpath 6 with [REDACTED], looking back towards the large house at the bottom of the footpath. [REDACTED]



Photo 5: Footpath 6 on a summer evening: an open, quiet route between fields of wheat. Under the scheme this would become a corridor between solar arrays and security fencing.



Photo 6: [REDACTED], at the top of Footpath 6, just before Mill Lane, on our daily walk.

Under the scheme, this walk would no longer be a walk through countryside. It would be a walk between rows of panels up to 4.5m high, deer-proof security fencing and pole-mounted CCTV (Block East Pye Solar). That would last for up to 60 years, the operational life the applicant itself

gives (East Pye Solar scheme overview). New planting would take many years to grow, and in any case it would replace the open views that make this path special. It would not restore them.

National Policy Statement EN-3 (paras 2.10.33–2.10.35) says applicants should keep public rights of way that cross a site open "as far as is practicable and safe". It encourages them to design the layout "to ensure continued recreational use of public rights of way" during construction and especially during operation, and to "minimise the visual impacts of the development for those using existing public rights of way". A footpath that passes straight through a fenced solar field cannot meet that aim in any meaningful way. The Block East Pye Solar campaign estimates that around 30km of public rights of way would be directly affected across the whole scheme.

For walkers with dogs, and with grandchildren as young as ours, there is a further, practical concern. Footpath 6 runs onto Mill Lane, which is the proposed construction route. Walking dogs, and walking with young grandchildren, along a single-track lane used by HGVs would be unsafe for the two or more years of construction.

4. The wildlife we would lose

Living on the edge of these fields, we see wildlife every day. These are not one-off sightings. They are regular parts of our walks, all taken on or next to Footpath 6, Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane:

- **Roe deer.** We regularly see deer in the fields beyond the top of Footpath 6, across Mill Lane (Photo 7, [REDACTED]).
- **Muntjac deer.** We often see muntjac deer, including at night in our own garden when we are exercising the dogs. On still nights we can hear them barking to each other across the fields. They move freely between the gardens of [REDACTED] and the farmland that would be fenced off.
- **Brown hares.** Hares are a regular sight on the fields around Footpath 6. Brown hare is a Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and its numbers are in long-term decline.
- **Skylarks.** Every summer we have watched skylarks nesting in these fields and singing high above them. Skylark is Red-listed under Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (2021), and its UK breeding population has fallen sharply. Skylarks nest on the ground in open fields, which is exactly the habitat that would be covered with panels.
- **Owls.** We photographed a young owl in the trees across Mill Lane, right next to Footpath 6 (Photo 8). A young bird shows that owls are breeding and raising young here.
- **Buzzards.** Buzzards hunt over these fields. Photos 9 and 10 show a buzzard over Littlebeck Lane, across the road from the proposed solar site.



Photo 7: Deer photographed [REDACTED], just beyond the top of Footpath 6, across Mill Lane.



Photo 8: A young owl photographed in the trees across Mill Lane, directly next to Footpath 6.



Photo 9: A buzzard flying above Littlebeck Lane, across the road from the proposed Site 9 solar field.



Photo 10: Close-up of the same buzzard over Littlebeck Lane.

These concerns are supported by the evidence on record:

- In its Scoping Opinion, the Planning Inspectorate noted the potential presence of Red-list species "such as skylark" and required the applicant to assess significant effects on breeding birds during construction (para 3.15.11).
- Brooke Wood County Wildlife Site, a replanted ancient woodland, lies only about 140m west of Site 9 (Scoping Report, Table 8.3). Block East Pye Solar reports barbastelle bat activity specifically in Brooke woods, and maternity colony core sustenance zones overlapping the scheme. Barbastelles depend on dark, connected landscapes.
- Brooke Parish Council has asked for the effects of extensive deer fencing on deer and hares to be assessed, including their ability to move across the landscape, feed and breed, and the risk of animals being forced onto the roads.
- The applicant's own habitat survey records that "a mature hedgerow bisecting the parcel had recently been felled and cleared" on Site 9 (Scoping Report, Table 8.5). Residents report that this happened in March 2024. Block East Pye Solar states that the hedgerow was removed during the nesting season and that an ancient ditch was filled in. This habitat has already been lost before any consent.

Fencing these fields off and covering them with panels would break up the open, connected farmland these animals use. "Biodiversity net gain" on paper elsewhere in the scheme would not replace the skylarks over Footpath 6 or the hares in the fields behind our home.

5. Construction traffic on Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane

Mill Lane runs into Littlebeck Lane (Photo 3). This lane is barely wide enough for a single car and relies on passing places for vehicles to get past each other. It has no pavements and is used by

walkers, dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It is simply not suitable for heavy vehicles or large infrastructure deliveries.

Despite this, the applicant identifies Littlebeck Lane as an access route for Site 9. Option A in the Scoping Report is "From B1332 Norwich Road, westbound on Littlebeck Lane, north onto access point on Site 9" (Table 10.4). The applicant's published figures show:

- Peak construction traffic of 48 one-way HGV movements a day to the solar sites, or 96 movements including arrivals and departures.
- Construction from 2028, taking around two years. Working hours would be 07:00–18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00–13:30 on Saturdays, with some work possibly outside these hours.
- Abnormal indivisible loads, such as transformers, will be needed. The Inspectorate has asked for their safety impacts to be assessed (Scoping Opinion, para 3.17.3).

HGVs on a single-track lane mean vehicles reversing to passing places, verges and ditches being damaged, and real danger to anyone on foot. This is the lane that Footpath 6 joins and that we, our dogs and our grandchildren use every day. Residents have also told Brooke Parish Council that the roads around Site 9 are narrow, single-track and already used as "rat runs". The Inspectorate has said that road-traffic vibration cannot be scoped out without evidence on road condition, vehicle routes and site access (para 3.18.3). We do not believe the applicant has shown that this route can be used safely.

6. Our home, our view and our wellbeing

From our home and garden, the view is of open, rolling farmland under a wide Norfolk sky. The scheme would replace it with an industrial installation of panels, inverters, fencing, cameras and access tracks for a generation. Residents have pointed out that the land rises by about 9m from the High Green end towards Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane. That means panels would sit higher the further they are from the village, and would be very hard to screen from homes on High Green. Hedging takes many years to grow to any useful height, and it would close in the open outlook rather than protect it.

We are also concerned about:

- Construction noise, dust and disturbance over around two years, only about 100 yards from our home. Our grandchildren would be staying with us during that time.
- Operational noise from inverters and other equipment, glint and glare from the panels, and any security lighting on what is now a dark rural landscape. The Inspectorate required these to be properly assessed (Scoping Opinion, paras 3.6, 3.14.6 and 3.18).
- The effect on the value and saleability of homes around Site 9. Residents' statements to Brooke Parish Council describe estate agents' advice of losses of up to 30% for the most affected homes. A holiday-let business on Mill Lane, Brooke View Barns, expects to become unviable because it faces the site directly.
- The stress and worry the scheme has already caused us and our neighbours, and the loss of the peace and space that are the reason we live here.

Most of all, this would change the experience our children and grandchildren have of visiting us. The countryside they enjoy here would be replaced by a fenced, industrial landscape for up to 60 years, which is in effect the rest of our lives and much of theirs.

7. Dark skies

One of the things we treasure most about living here only becomes clear after dark. On a clear night the sky above our garden is full of stars and planets. It is so dark that we can watch satellites crossing the sky. Our grandchildren see a night sky here that most children growing up today never see.

This is not just our own impression. Seething Observatory, run by the Norwich Astronomical Society, is only 3.1 miles from our home as the crow flies (4.4 miles by road). The Society moved there in 1994 to get away from light pollution, and describes the site as having "stunning dark, star filled skies". Brooke Parish Council has also described this area as a landscape "with dark skies".

The scheme puts this darkness at risk:

- Construction is planned from 07:00 to 18:00. Through the autumn and winter months that means working in the dark, with floodlighting of compounds, haul routes and work areas close to our home.
- Once operational, the site would have security fencing and pole-mounted CCTV, and possibly security lighting, substations and other equipment that needs lighting.
- The Planning Inspectorate said there was not enough information to scope out lighting effects. It required the applicant to assess the effects of lighting on landscape, visual and ecological receptors (including bats), and to describe the lighting design (Scoping Opinion, para 3.14.6).

Once a dark sky is lost it is very hard to get back. We ask that, if consent is granted at all, there is a binding Requirement for no permanent external lighting at Site 9. Any construction lighting should be shielded, pointed downwards and switched off outside working hours. The impact on Seething Observatory's dark-sky setting should also be assessed.

8. Our local community and way of life

We support our local farms. We buy our beef and pork from Old Hall Farm at Woodton, a family-run farm shop whose meat is reared on local farms. We take our grandchildren there to see the cows, emus and goats, and to have Sunday lunch in the café. We believe Old Hall Farm is at risk from the East Pye Solar cables, and that other local farms are at risk because of the loss of farmland. This rural economy depends on the land staying in farming.

We have lived in Norfolk for over 50 years and chose this way of life. We have nothing to gain from this development:

- There will be few local jobs.
- We will not receive any discount on our energy costs.
- No one will thank us for our sacrifice.
- Our way of life will be affected forever.

There is also the financial cost we will bear if we ever need to sell and move as we get older. The value and saleability of our home, which is in effect our security for later life, would be hit by having an industrial solar site at the bottom of the footpath.

9. Wider reasons this is the wrong place

As well as these personal impacts, we support the following points made by Block East Pye Solar about Site 9 and the scheme as a whole:

- **No need shown for this location.** The applicant relies on general national need and has not shown why this particular site is necessary. Block East Pye Solar points out that the applicant's own material accepts that prioritised schemes already meet the relevant regional solar capacity ranges.
- **Land choice and policy.** EN-3 (para 2.10.21) says applicants should, where possible, use previously developed, brownfield, contaminated and industrial land, and should prefer poorer-quality agricultural land, avoiding Best and Most Versatile land where possible. This is productive arable farmland, as the wheat in Photo 5 shows.
- **Water environment.** Site 9 lies within the River Tas chalk-stream and chalk-aquifer catchment. Impacts on private water supplies, private sewerage and hydrological connectivity have not been properly assessed. The Inspectorate has said the River Tas should be fully considered (Scoping Opinion, para 3.15.20).
- **Heritage.** Brooke is largely a conservation area with many listed buildings, and the scheme's zone of influence includes more than 300 listed buildings. A medieval coin and enclosures that may be medieval to post-medieval have been recorded within Site 9 itself (Scoping Report, paras 9.4.27–9.4.28).
- **Rare botany.** Block East Pye Solar reports that a botanist has called for full-season botanical surveys of the access routes and cable corridors, which are known for rare plant assemblages, before road widening is allowed.
- **Too much left to later approvals.** The draft Order leaves too much to later plans, approvals and mitigation. The problems we describe should be resolved before consent, not put off until afterwards.
- **No local benefit.** Brooke would carry all the harm of hosting Site 9 and receive no meaningful benefit.

10. What we are asking the Examining Authority to do

1. Recommend to the Secretary of State that development consent is refused.
2. If not, recommend that Site 9 at Brooke is removed from the scheme, because of its closeness to homes, the Brooke Conservation Area and Footpath 6, and its wildlife value.
3. Include Footpath 6 (from High Green Gardens to Mill Lane), Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane in the site inspection, so the Examining Authority can see the open views, the width of the lanes and how close our homes are.
4. As a minimum, if Site 9 stays in, secure through Requirements:
 - no construction or delivery traffic on Mill Lane or Littlebeck Lane;
 - Footpath 6 kept open throughout, inside a wide, unfenced green corridor with open views, not a fenced alleyway;

- generous buffers between panels and homes on High Green and High Green Gardens, with no panels on the higher ground towards Mill Lane;
- full surveys of skylark, brown hare, owls, bats and botany before consent, not after it;
- no permanent external lighting, shielded construction lighting only, and enforceable limits on noise and construction hours.

Conclusion

We support renewable energy in the right places. Site 9 is the wrong place. It would put an industrial power station at the bottom of our village, around [REDACTED] from our home, and across the footpath our family walks every day. It would remove the wildlife we treasure, threaten the dark skies over our home, and send construction traffic down a lane that cannot take it. We object because the applicant has not shown that this harmful scheme is necessary, fairly consulted on, or environmentally acceptable in this location.

Thank you for considering this representation.

Michael Phillips

Helen Phillips

[REDACTED]

Sources referred to

- Planning Inspectorate project page, East Pye Solar (EN0110014): <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0110014>
- East Pye Solar EIA Scoping Report, January 2025 (paras 2.11.3, 2.11.16, 9.4.27–28; Tables 7.2, 8.3, 8.5, 9.10, 10.4): <https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN0110014-000003-East%20Pye%20EIA%20Scoping%20Report%2015.01.25.pdf>
- Planning Inspectorate Scoping Opinion for East Pye Solar, including consultee responses from Brooke Parish Council (paras 3.6, 3.14.6, 3.15.11, 3.15.20, 3.17.3, 3.18.3): https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN0110014-000012-EN0110014%20-%20East%20Pye%20Solar%20Scoping%20Opinion_FINAL.pdf
- East Pye Solar: construction, operation and decommissioning (HGV numbers, hours, programme): <https://www.eastpyesolar.co.uk/construction-operation-and-decommissioning>
- East Pye Solar: scheme overview (sites, 60-year operational phase): <https://www.eastpyesolar.co.uk/scheme-overview>
- National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), paras 2.10.21, 2.10.33–2.10.35: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6915b78bbc34c86ce4e6e71f/national-policy-statement-for-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en-3-web-accessible.pdf>
- Block East Pye Solar: objections and key facts: <https://blockeastpyesolar.co.uk/objections/>
- Block East Pye Solar (BEPS): Main reasons to object, site-by-site guide (Site 9): <https://blockeastpyesolar.co.uk>
- Wildlife Trusts: skylark, Red-listed under Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (2021): <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/birds/larks-sparrows-pipits-wagtails-and-dunnock/skylark>
- Norwich Astronomical Society: Seething Observatory: <https://norwichastro.org.uk/observatory/>
- Old Hall Farm, Woodton: <https://www.oldhallfarm.co.uk/>
- List of species of principal importance in England (Section 41, NERC Act 2006), including brown hare: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_species_and_habitats_of_principal_importance_in_England

All photographs were taken by us on or next to Footpath 6, Mill Lane and Littlebeck Lane, Brooke, except Photo 3. Photo 3 is an annotated aerial image of Site 9 published by the Block East Pye Solar campaign.